

Dean's Message —from Fiscal Year 2013 to 2014

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I will summarize the activities of the Graduate School of Engineering and also College of Engineering Science from fiscal 2013 through the beginning of fiscal 2014.

When I took over as dean in April 2014, my manifesto was the realization of a more vital Graduate School of Engineering; aiming for a “graduate engineering school at a research university,” while honoring the existing plans for reform, I pursued the following four concrete goals. Goal (1): Design of an attractive future image of the Graduate School of Engineering; Goal (2): Under the discipline of “tekizai-tekisho”, each professor should put more emphasis on his or her main activities among four categories: education, research, public contributions, and administration; Goal (3): More globalized education and research, and Goal (4): Listening to public opinion.

From April 2013 on, I was caught up in the mission–redefinition activities conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), which concluded in June 2013. The essence of the conclusion thereof was that the Graduate School of Engineering at YNU is ranked in the top class educationally because of its many Ph.D graduates; however, its research activities are ranked among the second group, mainly due to modest external funds and fewer citations of published papers from YNU. This means that if we still aim at YNU

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being a research university, we need to make more efforts to enhance research activities in the Graduate School of Engineering.

In this context, I tried to activate research activities through, in particular, increasing the external funds obtained from “Kakenhi” (Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research). We organized “Kakenhi” groups to discuss and polish ideas for new grant proposals. Elsewhere, we increased the payback amount for indirect costs from the previous year. At the same time, while recommending approaches to grants more difficult to obtain, we increased the insurance for proposals not adopted, securing incentives. The monetary incentives for interdisciplinary projects, group projects, and research forums in the Graduate School of Engineering was re-designed and additional research time for each professor was planned for. As a result, the number of proposals submitted in November increased, including new plans and those in the tougher grant categories.

Elsewhere, from May 2013 on I collected many specific ideas on how our Graduate School might become more active in each field. As a result, more than one hundred proposals were sent to me, and I categorized them into fields for consideration including undergraduate education, graduate education, research, administration, evaluation management and others. This led to the resolution of numerous inconveniences. For example, the same-day issue of campus parking permits, re-consideration of travel expense breakdowns, incentive re-consideration in terms of monetary return to researchers, bonuses reflecting indirect funding, the strong necessity of increasingly globalized education, a unified management system for research achievements, self-declaration of effort management and so on. Most of these were resolved. For example, in June 2014 the YNU president presented rewards to researchers receiving substantial external funds.

In December 2013, the Dean’s strategic funding was distributed to (1) intensive projects in EP’s in the College of Engineering Science or specialization divisions in the Graduate School of Engineering, (2) support for English lecturing, and (3) support for supervision of more doctoral students. Also, Dean’s lunch meetings were held with approximately 60 young and recently hired faculty members. One remaining promise is Goal (1) Design of an attractive future image of the Graduate School of Engineering. This will be taken under discussion during this year.

Since April 2014, I have initiated (1) an international distinguished lecture series, (2) an international planning committee aimed at more globalized education, and so on. I am always aiming for an open Dean’s office, and looking forward to your visit whenever you have opinions on the Graduate School of Engineering.
